DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 188 577 IR 008 378

AUTHOR Popplestone, John A.; McPherson, Marion White
TITLE The Inauguration of the Child Development Film Archives. Final Report.
INSTITUTION Akron Univ., Ohio.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Human Development (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 29 Dec 78
NOTE 9p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Archives; Audiovisual Aids; Cataloging; *Child Development; *Films; *Filmstrips; Library Acquisition; Storage

ABSTRACT

The cataloging of films acquired by the Child Development Film Archives disclosed approximately 3500 separate units, or 804,232 feet of footage. An inventory sheet has been completed for each film which provides a record of the content of each cinema, and collectively, constitute a table of contents to the total collection. Variables specified on inventory sheets include: children--number, sex, age, ethnicity, amount and nature of clothing, biopathology, and psychopathology; adults--number, sex, and interaction with children; and animals--number and species. For each category there is an enumeration of the specific activities depicted. The milieu in which the action occurs is identified, as well at the equipment used. Changes in content within a film are recorded and the resulting variations in subjects are noted. Identifying data also included on inventory sheets include title, purpose, presence of a sound track, existence and location of relevant documents, whether the pictures are chromatic or achromatic, notes regarding visual (and audio) clarity, names of the members of the cast and of institutions, length of the footage, its width, projection time, container label, and storage location. Each film has been cleaned and rated for physical condition. The collection is currently housed in Pierce Library at the University of Akron. (Author/JEG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED188577

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

THE INAUGURATION OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT FILM ARCHIVES. FINAL REPORT

by

John A. Popplestone and
Marion White McPherson

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

John A. Popplestone

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

IR008378

HEW - Office of Human Development
90-C-984
Funding Period: 9/30/76 - 9/29/78

Final Report - December 29, 1978

The Inauguration of the Child Development Film Archives

John A. Popplestone and Marion White McPherson
Project Directors

The cataloguing of films acquired by the Child Development Film Archives disclosed approximately 3500 separate units. These comprise 804,232 feet of footage or 152.31 miles! Following is a list of the generators as well as the number of films and length of footage:

Originator	Donor	Number: Films	Feet
Arnold Gesell	Yale University	2,164	342,922
L. Joseph Stone	L.J. Stone & Vassar College	1,048	396,147
Margaret Mahler	Margaret Mahler	264	58,927
Miscellaneous	Various Individuals	15	6,236
Total		3,491	804,232

A few of the reels may be duplicates of others, but matching the footage frame by frame so as to be certain of identity is a responsibility of the researcher, not of the archivist. In any event, the number of duplicates is minimal and poses only a very limited threat to the impressively large number of individual research films. Deep appreciation is expressed to the Office of Human Development - HEW whose financial support made possible the acquisition and cataloguing of this collection.

An Inventory Sheet has been completed for each film. These provide a record of the content of each cinema and, collectively, constitute a table of contents to the total collection. The variables specified on the inventory sheets include:

Child(ren) - the number, sex, age, ethnicity, amount and nature of clothing, biopathology and psychopathology; a few films focus on parts rather than the entire body and are specified as Human Details.
Adult(s) - the number, sex, and interaction with child(ren).
Animal(s) - the number and species.

For each of these categories there is an enumeration of the specific activities that are depicted. The milieu in which the action occurs is identified as Laboratory, School Room, Museum, etc. Equipment is specified as Laboratory Appurtenances (e.g. activity crib, visual cliff, psychometric equipment), Play Materials, and Children's Productions (e.g. drawings, paintings, block structures). Changes in content within a film are recorded and the resulting variations in subjects are noted.

The identifying data for each film are also reported on the Inventory Sheet. Typically these include: title, purpose of the cinema, presence of sound track, existence and location of relevant documents, whether the pictures are chromatic or achromatic, notes regarding visual (and audio) clarity, names of the members of the cast and of institutions, length of the footage, its width, projection time, container label, and storage location.

These notations are described more completely in the attached Researchers' Guide to Specific Content in the Child Development Film Archives. An Inventory Sheet is also attached.

The entries on the Inventory Sheet are designated in language that is

compatible with machine storage, although at the date of this writing automation is not warranted. Research on the history of child development as well as investigations based on retrospective films are conducted only by a small group of researchers. When their number increases significantly, the Child Development Film Archives data can be readily transferred to a computer.

Currently researchers search the records manually and are able to do so rapidly because extraneous material can be immediately identified and dismissed. For example, an investigator who is seeking footage portraying eight-year-old boys in cooperative play can identify on sight all inventories of school age boys and needs to inspect in detail only those particular records.

Archival materials are priceless and must be maintained under conditions that minimize possibilities of theft and destruction. These restrictions do not permit the loaning of materials. This barrier to research is heightened in the case if 125,889 feet for which Gesell used 35 mm film. Projection equipment for film of this width is extremely scarce and, in fact, the project staff was able to view this footage only because Dr. Louise Bates Ames of the Gesell Institute of Child Development generously gave the Archives a viewer. As a service to researchers, 4,750 feet of this 35 mm film was transferred onto 16 mm. These pictures depict cinematographic methods and portray samples of the large bank of pictures of feeding, bathing, and mobility. These items are available for loan.

The funding for this project was awarded for the inauguration of a

Child Development Film Archives. This goal has been accomplished and the next logical step, that of growth, is already underway. New deposits continue to arrive as, for example, the accession a month after the end of the funding period of 11,507 feet of films from the original Gesell collection. Parents Magazine Films deposits a copy of each new filmstrip as they produce it and these items arrive on a regular basis. Dr. Sylvia Brody has promised to forward a large accumulation of research footage and shipment is expected in the near future. Solicitions of films are made whenever appropriate.

This numerical fluidity combines with the abundance of material already at hand to make actually counting the incidence of each variable on the Inventory Sheet more of a luxury than a necessity. For example, knowing the precise amount of footage that depicts boys as well as the amount that depicts girls is not sufficiently important to merit the personnel time that such tallies would consume. A second illustration - the Gesell footage comprises 342,922 feet and much of this portrays infants. Thus a researcher can be told with confidence that there is extensive coverage of three-month-old infants. Further, should an investigator need to know specific amounts, access can be readily granted to data necessary for the calculation.

As each film was cleaned, the technician rated its physical condition. The three large collections (Gesell, Stone, and Mahler) comprise 797,996 feet, and 72% of this footage was judged to be in good condition, 25% as fair, and 3% as poor. These films are currently housed in Bierce Library, the principal repository at The University of Akron. This structure is

merely six years old and is the product of a project that totalled $8,080,000 in the currency of the early 70's. The building is sound, both in engineering and in architecture, and thereby allows fire and theft protection as well as the maintenance of a temperature of 72° F with only minimal fluctuations and a relative humidity of 35 %, also with limited variation.

These conditions are satisfactory for storage, but long term preservation may require temperatures as low as 32° to 50° F, and the most commonly recommended relative humidity is 50%. The University intends to enlarge the present library building within the next few years and currently the feasibility of a film storage area that meets the specifications for ideal conditions is being considered. Sudden changes in temperature are damaging to film and hence a series of intermediate areas between the storage and projection rooms are also being incorporated in the cost to benefit computations. Until these facilities are available, samples of the films will be checked at six month intervals to assure that no detectable deterioration has taken place.

Because of the combustive propensity of nitrate film, the Archives preserves only that which is on an acetate base. (Yale University destroyed all nitrate footage a considerable period of time prior to forwarding films to the Child Development Film Archives and only incidental amounts have been offered for deposit). Thus, the current chemical integrity combines with the present environmental adequacy and uniformity, the recent cleaning, and the good condition of 97% of the footage to warrant the prediction that deterioration is unlikely.

The processing of these films has been supplemented by efforts to inform professionals involved in the field of child development about the impending accessibility of these films. The inauguration of this project was announced in numerous journals and news letters. Since that time Open Houses devoted to answering questions about the facility were held during the Annual Meetings of the American Psychological Association both in 1977 and in 1978. In 1977 excerpts from the pictures and a paper describing their potential for research use were presented at the Annual Meeting of the Midwestern Association of Behavior Analysis. The resources were also described briefly at the 1978 Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuroscience. In 1978 the Director of the Archives was a member of a group that met to formulate plans for the formation of an archives for child development. The accumulation of films was described for this group.

Exposure of this nature is being continued. A display of archival materials is already scheduled for the 1979 Annual Meeting of the Western Psychological Association, and items relevant to the films will be exhibited. A copy of this report is to be sent on the date of its issue to each member of the Board of Advisors together with an invitation to continue serving on the Board. As soon as that roster is complete a new brochure will be printed. The format of this revision will be essentially the same as that of the initial brochure. Both the copy for the new pamphlet and the original one are attached.

These materials are essential in replying to inquiries about the nature of the films and the conditions of scholarly access. As soon as

this literature is ready for distribution, the professional journals and news letters will again be asked to publish notices of the availability of the films. Copies will also be forwarded to the numerous individuals and agencies who have made direct mail inquiries during the last two years.

The inauguration of the Child Development Film Archives is complete. The enterprise is now moving into a phase of service to personnel concerned with child development.